

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-19

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1205

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY BONN

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USNMR SHAPE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 VIENNA 0323

MBFR NEGOTIATIONS

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR NEGOTIATIONS: PRESS BRIEFING BY AMBASSADOR
QUARLES, JANUARY 14, 1974

SUMMARY

ON JANURAY 14, BEFORE SOME SIXTY INTERNATIONAL MEDIA
REPRESENTATIVES, AMBASSADOR QUARLES, CHIEF MBFR DELEGATE
FROM THE NETHERLANDS, GAVE AN INFORMAL PRESS BRIEFING ON BEHALF
OF THE WESTERN PARTICIPANTS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. AFTER READING
PREPARED STATEMENT (SEE VIENNA 0277), AMBASSADOR QUARLES
RESPONDED TO QUESTIONS AS DETAILED BELOW. END SUMMARY.

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Q. THIS IS A TECHNICAL QUESTION: WHEN AND WHERE WILL THE

NEGOTIATIONS BE RESUMED?

A. WE ARE PRESENTLY DISCUSSING THIS WITH THE EASTERN PARTIES ABOUT THE EXACT DATE WHEN WE WILL RESUME. IT WILL BE A PLENARY SESSION AND I EXPECT IT TO BE THIS WEEK AT THE CONGRESS HOUSE. AS FAR AS I KNOW THE HOFBURG FACILITIES ARE NOT YET ENTIRELY AVAILABLE.

Q. DO YOU HAVE A KIND OF DIVISION OF LABOR WITH THE EAST EUROPEAN SIDE? THE POLISH AMBASSADOR GAVE A SUMMING-UP BEFORE THE BREAK AND YOU NOW HOLD THE PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE CONTINUATION OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. WAS THERE ANY REASON WHY YOU DID NOT GIVE THIS SUMMING-UP EARLIER? HAS ANYTHING OCCURRED TO CHANGE THE POSITION OF THE PARTICIPANTS?

A. NO, WE HAD A CHOICE. WE THOUGHT THIS WAS A GOOD MOMENT TO DRAW THE ATTENTION OF THE PRESS AND THE WORLD TO THE RESUMPTION OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. I WILL TRY TO GIVE YOU A FAIRLY FULL PICTURE OF WHERE THE SITUATION STANDS. IN THE MEANTIME SO MANY THINGS HAVE HAPPENED: WE HAVE HAD A SEVERE OIL CRISIS AND SO MANY OTHER THINGS THAT MIGHT TEND TO BLUR AND MAKE YOU FORGET THAT WE ARE STILL HERE.

Q. HAS THE CURRENT SO-CALLED ENERGY CRISIS HAD ANY EFFECT ON NATO THINKING AS FAR AS TROOP REDUCTIONS ARE CONCERNED?

A. WELL, AS YOU CAN SEE, WE HAVE ALL ARRIVED IN TIME. I DON'T THINK IT WILL AFFECT THE TALKS.

Q. MR. AMBASSADOR, THE WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES HAVE TALKED IN TERMS OF A POSSIBLE AGREEMENT IN 1975. AT THIS POINT IN TIME DO YOU BELIEVE THAT SUCH A TIME TABLE IS FEASIBLE?

A. THAT'S AN INTERESTING QUESTION. THE WHOLE PROBLEM, WHICH IS, AS YOU KNOW, VERY COMPLEX - THE PROBLEM

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BEFORE US IS TO TRY TO DEVELOP A PRACTICAL AND SIMPLE APPROACH TO IT. THAT IS WHAT WE ARE NOW GOING TO TRY AND DO.. TO ENGAGE THE OTHER SIDE TO ADOPT A COMMON APPROACH WHICH IS A STRAIGHTFORWARD ONE, A MANAGEABLE ONE. AND WE THINK THE MOST DIRECT AND SIMPLE ONE WOULD BE TO DISCUSS AND APPROACH THE PROBLEM ON THE BASIS OF THE PROPOSALS WE HAVE PUT FORWARD, AND THAT IF WE WOULD SUCCEED IN DOING

THIS, I COULD NOT EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF REACHING A FIRST-PHASE AGREEMENT AS WE CONCEIVE IT, LIMITED TO U.S.-SOVIET FORCES, BY THE END OF THIS YEAR OR THE BEGINNING OF NEXT YEAR. IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE. AS IT HAS BEEN PUT TO US BY THE OTHER SIDE, WHICH IS A VERY COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH, I THINK THIS APPROACH WOULD ENTAIL ALL OF US IN CONSIDERABLE LOSS OF TIME.

Q. MR. AMBASSADOR, I WOULD LIKE TO ASK ABOUT WHAT SEEMS TO ME TO BE A CERTAIN CONTRADICTION IN THE WESTERN POSITION. THIS BUSINESS OF OBTAINING SOME KIND OF SYMMETRY; IF THE INITIAL CUTS ARE LIMITED TO U.S. AND RUSSIAN FORCES, THE U.S. FORCES QUITE CLEARLY COME OUT OF SOUTHWESTERN GERMANY, A RATHER LIMITED AREA, WHEREAS THE RUSSIAN FORCES MIGHT COME OUT OF POLAND OR ANYWHERE. DOESN'T THAT CREATE AN IMBALANCE RATHER THAN MOVE TOWARD A BALANCE?

A. THE FIRST-PHASE AGREEMENT ONLY INITIATES THE MOVEMENT TO THIS BALANCE, THIS COMMON CEILING. SUCH A FIRST-STAGE AGREEMENT WOULD INCLUDE AN UNDERSTANDING THAT WE ARE MOVING ON TO COMPLETE THE COMMON CEILING IN THE SECOND STAGE ONLY. SO, I DO CONSIDER THAT THE FIRST-STAGE AGREEMENT AS IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED WOULD ALREADY BE A CONTRIBUTION TO STABILITY, BUT IT WOULD DEFINITELY NOT BRING IT ABOUT. DOES THAT ANSWER YOUR QUESTION? THE STEP WOULD BE TOO GREAT IN ONE STAGE.

Q. MR. AMBASSADOR, DOES THIS MEAN, SINCE YOU ARE MORE OR LESS INSISTING ON YOUR OWN PLAN WHICH WAS ALREADY KNOWN BEFORE THE RECESS, THAT THE THREE-PHASE PLAN PUT FORWARD BY THE EASTERN SIDE IS TOTALLY CONFIDENTIAL

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UNACCEPTABLE AND THAT YOU ARE NOT PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE ON IT AT ALL?

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A. ONE SHOULD NOT SPEAK IN TERMS OF THINGS BEING UNACCEPTABLE AND ABOUT REJECTION. WHAT WE ARE DOING IS TO TRY, AS I SAID, TO WORK OUT THIS COMMON APPROACH TO SIMPLIFY THE PROBLEMS. IF WE DON'T DO THIS WE WILL BE BOGGED DOWN INTO MONTHS OF NEGOTIATIONS AND I CANNOT SEE HOW WE WILL SOLVE THIS PROBLEM IF WE DO NOT SUCCEED IN GETTING THIS PROCESS OF SIMPLIFICATION. THAT IS WHY WE HAVE SUGGESTED TO CONCENTRATE ON GROUND FORCES AND IN THE FIRST PHASE CONCENTRATE ON U.S.-SOVIET FORCES ONLY. THAT IS WHY WE WISH TO PUT OFF THE WHOLE PROBLEM OF INCLUDING NON-SOVIET, NON-U.S. FORCES TO THE SECOND STAGE OF AGREEMENT. THIS PROBLEM OF EUROPEAN FORCES IS A MUCH MORE COMPLEX ONE THAN THE PROBLEM OF WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. AND SOVIET FORCES. SO IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE PROCEED IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS BY STAGES, DEALING WITH EACH PROBLEM IN ITS TIME AS IT COMES ALONG, AND NOT TRYING TO TAKE TOO MUCH HAY ON OUR FORK. THE FRENCH HAVE A SAYING FOR THIS. CONFIDENTIAL

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Q. DO YOU SEE ANY PROSPECT AT THIS JUNCTURE THAT THE OTHER SIDE WILL BE READY TO WORK ALONG THESE LINES AND TO PROCEED AT AN EARLY DATE TOWARD NEGOTIATIONS BASED ON YOUR FIRST-STAGE PROPOSAL?

A. I CANNOT ANSWER THAT. WE WILL NOW PROCEED TO ENTER

INTO DETAILED DISCUSSIONS ON VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE SUBJECT MATTER AND I DO HOPE I WILL BE ABLE TO GIVE YOU A MORE PRECISE ANSWER THAN THAT IN ABOUT A MONTH'S TIME. BUT IT IS DEFINITELY TOO EARLY TO SAY.

Q. MR. AMBASSADOR, WHEN SOME AMERICANS AND SOME SOVIET FORCES WITHDRAW FROM CENTRAL EUROPE IN THE FIRST STAGE OF YOUR PLAN, WILL THEY TAKE ALL THEIR HEAVY AND LIGHT MATERIAL WITH THEM, OR WOULDN'T THEY? THE AMERICANS WOULD HAVE TO TAKE IT BACK A LONG WAY AND THE SOVIETS ONLY A SHORT DISTANCE.

A. NOW WE ARE ENTERING INTO SPECIFICS OF THE PROPOSALS AND INTO DETAILS WHICH WE HAVE REFRAINED FROM MAKING PUBLIC, AND I DON'T THINK IT WOULD SERVE ANY GREAT ADVANTAGE IF I WERE TO DO SO NOW. WE HAVE ASKED FOR GREATER SOVIET REDUCTIONS THAN WE SUGGEST FOR OUR OWN FORCES, WHICH IS TO DEAL WITH THIS PROBLEM WHICH IS A REAL ONE WHICH EXISTS, WHICH WE CANNOT GET AROUND, WITH THESE DISPARITIES WITH ONE-SIDED ADVANTAGES IN GROUND FORCE MANPOWER, IN TANK POTENTIAL AND IN GEOGRAPHY, WHICH IS THE POINT YOU HAVE JUST MENTIONED YOURSELF.

Q. YOU SAID, MR. AMBASSADOR, THAT THE HUNGARIAN QUESTION STILL IS OPEN AND THE WESTERN SIDE WANTS TO CONCENTRATE ON GROUND FORCES. DOES THIS MEAN THAT YOU WILL NOW PUT THE HUNGARIAN QUESTION IN THESE DISCUSSIONS ON THE TABLE AGAIN?

A. IT DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN THAT. WE HAVE ALWAYS SAID THAT WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO BRING UP THE HUNGARIAN QUESTION ON CERTAIN AGREEMENTS AND MEASURES WHEN WE FEEL CIRCUMSTANCES AND GENERAL CONDITIONS SO

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REQUIRE.

Q. MR. AMBASSADOR, IS THERE ANY LINK TO BE ESTABLISHED BETWEEN YOUR PRESENT STATEMENT AND THE STATEMENT OF MR. JAMES SCHLESINGER IN WHICH HE SPOKE ABOUT A POSSIBLE REVIREMENT OF THE AMERICAN FORCES?

A. I DON'T THINK I WANT TO GO INTO THOSE KINDS OF QUESTIONS. I CAN ONLY SAY THAT WHAT I HAVE SAID TO YOU ON OUR POSITION WITH REGARDS TO MBFR AND PROPOSALS OF REDUCTIONS ON BOTH SIDES HAS MOST DEFINITELY THE APPROVAL OF THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND THEREFORE DOES REPRESENT ENTIRELY THE AMERICAN VIEW. SO, I EXPECT IT DOES ENTIRELY REPRESENT THE POINT OF VIEW OF

MR. SCHLESINGER AS WELL.

Q. AS AN OUTSIDER I HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE TWO POINTS OF VIEW ARE SO FAR APART THAT ONLY A MEETING AT THE SUMMIT, FOR EXAMPLE, OR A VISIT OF NIXON TO MOSCOW COULD BRING A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM. WHAT IS YOUR OPINION?

A. I THINK IT'S A BIT DIFFICULT TO SPECULATE ON OUR CHANCES OF A COMPROMISE. I NEVERTHELESS FEEL THAT THEY ARE THERE. WE HAVE SIMILAR INTERESTS, WHICH IS ONE OF DETENTE IN EUROPE; WE BOTH FEEL THAT THESE NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD GO AHEAD. THE OTHER SIDE HAS MENTIONED DATES; THEY HAVE SHOWN GREAT INTEREST. I THEREFORE FEEL THAT OUR INTERESTS COINCIDE TO THE POINT WHERE WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO WORK OUT WHAT I ALREADY TERMED IS THIS COMMON APPROACH TO THIS PROBLEM, AND IN DOING SO IT IS IN OUR INTERESTS TO SIMPLIFY THE PROBLEM. SO THERE ARE DEFINITELY MANY ASPECTS IN WHICH OUR INTERESTS ARE AT LEAST PARALLEL. AND, OF COURSE, WHAT IS THE MAIN DIFFICULTY IS THAT THE SOVIET UNION AND THE WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES CONSIDER THE EXISTING RELATIONSHIP TO BE A SATISFACTORY ONE, AND BASE THEIR PROPOSALS ON THAT RELATIONSHIP, WHICH THEY WISH TO MAINTAIN THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE OPERATION, AND WE FEEL AND ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED THAT THIS SITUATION IS AN UNSATISFACTORY ONE - ONE WHICH IS CONFIDENTIAL

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A SITUATION OF IMBALANCE. I DRAW YOUR ATTENTION TO THE FACT THAT IN A COMMUNIQUE OF JUNE LAST YEAR WE BOTH AGREED TO IMPROVE STABILITY, STABLE RELATIONSHIPS, SECURITY, AND OUR WHOLE CONCEPT OF COMMON CEILING IN APPROXIMATE PARITY OF GROUND FORCES IS A CONCEPT WHICH INTRODUCES INTO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE EAST AND WEST SOMETHING NEW, SOMETHING WHICH IS OF THE HIGHEST IMPORTANCE. IT IS A POLITICAL-MILITARY CONCEPT. IT IS NOT ONLY A MILITARY CONCEPT. IT IS ONLY IN A SITUATION OF

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MBFR NEGOTIATIONS

FROM US REP MBFR

APPROXIMATE FORCE LEVEL PARITY ON BOTH SIDES IN CENTRAL EUROPE, AND WE ARE LIMITING OURSELVES TO CENTRAL EUROPE, AND NOT WHAT THE SITUATION IS BEYOND CENTRAL EUROPE. WE WANT TO CREATE THE BASIS - THE FRAMEWORK - FOR WHAT WE BOTH TERM DETENTE. AND IF WE BOTH MEANT MORE OF LESS THE SAME, WHEN WE MENTIONED THAT AS OUR BOJECTIVE, THAT MEANS WE WISH TO CREATE A SITUATION IN WHICH WE CAN FREELY COOPERATE POLITICALLY, ECONOMICALLY, CULTURALLY, HUMAN RELATIONSHIP, BETWEEN EASTERN AND WESTERN EUROPE, WITHOUT ANY POTENTIAL THREATS,WITHOUT ANY SUPERIORITY IN FORCE LEVELS. FOR WHAT WOULD BE THE NEED FOR SUCH SUPERIORITY IN SUCH A SITUATION WHICH I HAVE JUST DESCRIBED? AND MOREOVER, MBFR TENDS TO LAY CEILINGS ON OUR FORCE LEVELS. AND IF THIS CEILING
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WHICH IS TO BE LAID IS NOT GOING TO BE A COMMON CEILING, THAT IS A SITUATION OF APPROXIMATE PARITY ON EACH SIDE, IT MEANS IT WILL BE A CEILING OF INEQUALITY. AND THAT CEILING OF INEQUALITY WILL BE CONVENTIONALIZED BY MBFR AGREEMENT. THAT MEANS TO SAY THAT IT WILL

BE PERPETUATED UNTIL DOOMSDAY. AND THAT IS A SITUATION WHICH NO ONE CAN REASONABLY EXPECT THE WEST TO ACCEPT. AND I THINK THIS IS A MOST POSITIVE CONCEPTION AND I HAVE CONFIDENCE THAT THIS CONCEPTION WILL PREVAIL UPON ALL OF US CONCERNED AND WILL OPEN THE WAY TO HARMONIOUS AND FREER RELATIONSHIPS WHICH BOTH SIDES HAVE SET AS THEIR GOAL HERE AND IN GENEVA.

Q. IF THE EAST WOULD NOT ACCEPT THE IDEA OF A COMMON CEILING, DO YOU HAVE AN ALTERNATIVE PROPOSAL?

A. I THINK THIS IS THE OBJECT OF MBFR AND THIS IS WHAT WE SHOULD STRIVE FOR. WE ARE UNDER NO TIME LIMIT, ALTHOUGH WE, TOO, WOULD LIKE TO CONCLUDE AS SOON AS WE CAN.

Q. MR. AMBASSADOR, YOU HAVE LAID STRESS ON THE COINCIDENCE OF INTERESTS BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES. AS FAR AS THE TWO SETS OF PROPOSALS WHICH ARE LYING ON THE TABLE AT THE MOMENT, DO YOU SEE ANY COMMON ELEMENTS BETWEEN THEM?

A. THAT IS WHAT WE ARE GOING TO TRY TO FIND OUT.

Q. BUT, YOU HAVEN'T FOUND OUT YET?

A. E'RE GOING TO ENTER INTO DETAILED DISCUSSIONS; CLEARLY BOTH SIDES WANT TO RE*UCE FORCES FOR ONE.

Q. IN YOUR STATEMENT YOU CALLED THE EASTERN PROPOSALS SUPERFICIAL. WOULD YOU COMMENT ON THAT?

A. I DID NOT SAY THEY WERE SUPERFICIAL. I SAID, IF I RECALL RIGHTLY, THAT THE METHOD OF THEIRS IS SUPERFICIALLY ONE OF EQUALITY. THEY PROPOSE EQUAL NUMBERS OF FORCES. MY THRUST WAS THAT APPLIED IN A CONFIDENTIAL

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SITUATION WHEREBY ONE SIDE POSSESSES A CONSIDERABLE MARGIN OF SUPERIORITY IN GROUND FORCES MUCH A METHOD DOES NOT PRODUCE AN EQUAL OUTCOME.

Q. MR. AMBASSADOR, MR. STRULAK SAID A MONTH AGO THAT THE WESTERN PROPOSALS WERE NOT HELPFUL AND DISTORTED THE PICTURE. WAS THIS ONLY RHETORIC, OR DO YOU FEEL THAT THIS WILL BE CARRIED FORTH INTO THIS SET OF NEGOTIATIONS WHICH WILL BE BEGINNING TOMORROW?

A. I DON'T QUITE KNOW TO WHAT ASPECT MR. STRULAK REFERRED. WHEN HE SAID THIS MAYBE HE WAS REFERRING

TO DATA BASE. IF THEY HAVE BETTER DATA TO PRODUCE WE
WOULD BE GLAD IF THEY WOULD.

Q. BUT HE WAS REFERRING TO DISPARITIES IN THE CONTEXT.

A. WE HAVE ON FAIRLY GOOD BASIS PRODUCED THE FIGURES
GIVEN AND I THINK IT IS UP TO THEM TO SAY TO US, TO
CONVINCE US, THAT THESE ARE NOT THE EXACT FIGURES.
PERHAPS THEY THINK THEY ARE DISTORTED BECAUSE WE HAVE
BEEN HESITANT, WE ARE ADVERSE, TO INCLUDE AIR FORCES
AND NUCLEAR FORCES. I HAVE GIVEN YOU THE REAONS FOR
THAT.

Q. A TECHNICAL QUESTION, SIR. YOU MENTIONED THAT
YOU EXPECT TO GIVE US MORE INFORMATION IN A MONTH OR
TWO. DO YOU SEE THIS STAGE AS GOING FOR A MONTH OR
SO? DO YOU HAVE ANY PREDICTIONS?

A. WELL, WE INTEND TO REMAIN HERE TILL EASTER. WE
BREAK AT EASTER. I HOPE THAT WE WILL DEVELOP THIS
COMMON APPROACH FAIRLY SOON BECAUSE IT IS IMPORTANT
THAT WE GET INTO DETAILED DISCUSSIONS ON THE ASPECTS
WE ARE TALKING ABOUT. WE HAVE NOW LAID BEFORE THE
OTHER SIDE THE WHOLE PICTURE AS WE SEE IT, AND NOW
WE SHOULD START TO DISCUSS THE POSSIBLE APPROACHES,
POSSIBLE FORMS OF AGREEMENT.HUMES

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